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REMARKS

Claims 56-73 have been allowed. Claim 75 has been rewritten in independent form and includes all of the features of base claim 74. Claim 74 has therefore been cancelled by this amendment. Claims 76, 81, and 82, which were dependent from claim 74, have been amended to depend from claim 75, which now includes all of the features of claim 74. Claims 83-86 have been amended to depend from allowed claim 56. Claims 1-24, 27-42, 44-48, 50-52, 54-55, and 87-90 have been cancelled without prejudice to filing these claims in one or more continuation applications. Claims 91-110, previously withdrawn from consideration in view of a restriction requirement, have also been cancelled without prejudice to filing these claims in one or more divisional applications. Finally, new claims 111-118 have been added which are identical to original claims 83-86, except depending from allowed claim 65 (for new claims 111-114) and allowed claim 75 (for new claims 115-118). No new matter has been added. Thus, claims 56-73, 75-86, and 111-118 are pending.

Reconsideration and continued examination of the above-identified application are respectfully requested. The claims have been amended as described in more detail above. No search is necessitated by this amendment and no new questions of patentability should arise, since the scope of this subject matter has already been examined by the Examiner. No new matter has been added. Finally this amendment places the application in condition for allowance. Therefore, entry of this amendment is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

In paragraph 13 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner states that claims 56-73 are allowed. Furthermore, in paragraph 14, the Examiner states that claims 75, 77-78, and 80 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected based claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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Applicants are grateful for the allowable subject matter of claims 56-73. In addition, claim 75 has been rewritten in independent form and includes the features of the base claim 74, which has been cancelled by this amendment. Therefore, Applicants believe that claim 75 is also in condition for allowance.

Furthermore, claims 76, 81, and 82, which were dependent upon claim 74, have been amended to depend from claim 75, which includes all of the features of claim 74. Therefore, Applicants believe that claims 76, 81, and 82 are now in condition for allowance. Also, since claims 77 and 79 depend from claim 76 and claims 78 and 80 depend from claims 77 and 79 respectively, each of these claims should therefore also be in condition for allowance.

Applicants therefore believe that, along with claims 56-73, claims 75-82 should also be allowable.

Rejection of Claims

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-24, 27-42, 44-48, 50-52, 54-55, and 83-90 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over several combinations of references. The Examiner also rejected claims 74, 76, 79, and 81-82 as being anticipated by Sypek et al.

While Applicants disagree with these rejections, in order to expedite prosecution of this application, claims 1-24, 27-42, 44-48, 50-52, 54-55, and 87-90 have been cancelled without prejudice, making the rejection of these claims moot. Applicants reserve the right to file these claims in one or more continuation applications.

As discussed in more detail above, claim 74 has been cancelled in view of the amendment to claim 75, making the rejection of this claim moot. Also, claims 76, 79, 81, and 82 have been amended as discussed above. Applicants believe that these claims are in condition for allowance since each depends, either directly or indirectly, from claim 75, which has been rewritten in independent form and includes the features of base claim 74. Since claim 75 should be in condition for allowance, claims 76, 79, and 81-82 should also be in condition for allowance.

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Finally, claims 83-86 have been amended to depend from claim 56. Support for this amendment can be found throughout the present specification and claims as originally filed, including, for example, paragraphs [0026], [0027], [0074], and [0075]. Since these claims now depend from an allowed claim, claims 83-86 should also be allowable.

Thus, Applicants believe the pending claims of the present application are patentable over the various combinations of references cited by the Examiner and are also not anticipated by Sypek et al. Applicants therefore respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Regarding new claims 111-118, each of these claims are identical to claims 83-86, with the exception that claims 111-114 depend from claim 65 and claims 115-118 depend from claim 75. As discussed above regarding claims 83-86, support for this amendment can be found throughout the present specification and claims as originally filed. Since each of these claims depend from an allowed claim, claim 111-118 should also be allowable. Applicants therefore believe that new claims 111-118 are also patentable over the various combinations of references cited by the Examiner and are also not anticipated by Sypek et al.

Election/Restriction

On page 15 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner states that claims 91-110 are withdrawn from further consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. The Examiner notes that Applicants had timely traversed this restriction requirement. However, in paragraph 12, the Examiner states that a complete reply to the final rejection must include cancellation of these non-elected claims or other appropriate action.

As discussed in more detail above, claims 91-110 have been cancelled without prejudice. Applicants reserve the right to file these claims in one or more divisional applications.


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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants believe that this application is considered to be in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would further expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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